

VZCZCXRO0346
OO RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHLH RUEHNEH RUEHPW
DE RUEHNE #0162/01 0281307
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 281307Z JAN 10
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9286
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 8216
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 7225
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 3902
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2112
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6661
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA 1844
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHMCSUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 8841
RHMCSUU/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 000162

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/18/2020

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [AF](#) [PK](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: NSA NARAYANAN DISCUSSES AFGHANISTAN WITH SPECIAL
REPRESENTATIVE HOLBROOKE

Classified By: Ambassador Timothy Roemer for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Outgoing National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan discussed Afghanistan with Special Representative Richard Holbrooke January 18. Holbrooke explained President Obama's plan for the start of a phased troop withdrawal in 2011 rather than a precipitous pull out, and made the case for reintegration -- not reconciliation -- of former Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. Holbrooke assessed that Afghanistan was calmer politically than at any time since the election season began ten months ago, but that he was concerned about the Afghan National Police (ANP). Holbrooke said he did not favor an Indian role in ANP training due to the added strain it would place on the Indo-Pak relationship, and encouraged the Indian government instead to push agricultural development aggressively in Afghanistan. Narayanan also shared seven issues the Prime Minister had asked him to look after in his new role as Governor of West Bengal. END SUMMARY.

Post-Election Afghanistan Calmer Politically

- - -

¶2. (C) In his January 18 meeting with National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan, Special Representative Richard Holbrooke encouraged India to focus on increased agricultural assistance to Afghanistan rather than on training of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and explained President Obama's policy for the start of a phased troop withdrawal in 2011 rather than a pull out. Holbrooke assessed that, contrary to appearances, things were getting better in Afghanistan, which was calmer politically for the first time since before the elections. Holbrooke said that in Afghanistan 10 months out of the first year of the Obama Administration had been dominated by the elections, which have now passed. By the summer there would be close to 150,000 foreign troops in Afghanistan, including 110,000 Americans, but those forces alone were not sufficient to achieve a military victory.

Reintegration

- - -
13. (C) Holbrooke did not share the Indian government's concern that U.S. policies in support of reintegration of former Taliban fighters in Afghanistan would lead to a Taliban takeover of parts of the country. He added that Generals McChrystal and Petraeus were among the biggest supporters of reintegration because it meant they would have to fight and kill fewer of the enemy. He clarified that UK Special Representative Sherard Cowper-Coles' paper on the issue did not reflect U.S. policy.

ANSF Training Generous, but Agriculture More Important
- - -

14. (C) Holbrooke said there was an ongoing debate about the readiness of the Afghan National Army (ANA), but that he was more concerned about the Afghan National Police (ANP), which was in bad shape. Of the 96,000 ANP on paper, no one could say for sure how many were actually on the job. Attrition was at 26 percent annually, and only about 12 percent of the force were literate. The United States had spent billions on police training since 2002, and the training effort was now unified under a NATO command for the first time.

15. (C) Holbrooke was not enthusiastic about ANSF training programs in India because the marginal benefit of training of a few hundred or even a few thousand officers out of a total force of over 100,000 was not worth the added strain it would place on the Indo-Pak relationship. Narayanan said he

NEW DELHI 00000162 002 OF 002

believed India could offer the best mix of civil and para-military capabilities required by the ANP, adding that India also had important cultural ties with Afghans. Of course Pakistan would see an increased role in security forces training as an extension of Indian influence in Afghanistan, but Narayanan added, that "may not be a bad idea." Narayanan stressed that ANSF training would not be popular in India, perceived by some as acting at the behest of the United States, but that it was a genuine proposal that resulted from introspection about what more India could put on the table beyond humanitarian and development assistance. Holbrooke concluded that it was a generous idea, but encouraged India to push agricultural development aggressively in Afghanistan.

Narayanan's Plans in West Bengal
- - -

16. (C) Naryanan confirmed that he will be appointed Governor of the state of West Bengal following his retirement after five years as National Security Advisor. Narayanan said the Prime Minister had directed him to look after no less than seven issues in the politically complex state: (1) border issues with China; (2) military basing issues in Siliguri in the north of the state; (3) the Gorkhaland independence movement; (4) the on-going Naxalite/Maoist insurgency; (5) illegal migration from Bangladesh; (6) the politics of the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M); and (7) Mamata Bannerjee's All India Trinamool Congress. Considering this challenge, Narayanan quipped that he had considered "defecting" to the United States because he often felt he had more friends there than in India.

17. (U) SRAP Holbrooke has cleared this message.

ROEMER